JUSTICE

THE

Beſt Support

TO

GOVERNMENT:

OR,

A brief Account of ſome

Publick Tranſactions

During the Late WAR.

LONDON:
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TO THE

Lords Spiritual and Temporal

AND

Commons in Parliament Aſſembled.

THat we have been harras'd and almoſt begger'd by a tedious and Expenſive War, needs no Proof; but how this War came to be drawn out to this Length, and to drein the inexhauſtible Well dry (as the Popes uſe to ſtile this Iſland) is not poſſible for me to diſcover. However I have here laid down ſome Remarkable Inſtances how Evil minded Men have Clandeſtinely Crept into Places of the greateſt *Truſt*; whether meerly to enrich themſelves, or more barbarouſly only to wreck

wreck their Cauſeleſs Malice upon their Native Countrey; have extreamly contributed to the Diſcouraging, enſlaving and ~~even~~ totally ruining her. It hath been no ſmall or uſeleſs ſtratagem in this Age, to diſcountenance all manner of Information, and that all ſorts of Villany might Reign Rampant, the Name of an informer hath been reputed Monſtrous. By which means ſome Honeſt Perſons, who have by accident come to the Knowledge of Tranſactions, both unwarrantable and of dangerous Conſequence to the Nation, have conniv'd at all, and ſtifl'd that affection they had, and ſo fair an opportunity to demonſtrate to their Countrey, upon the Fear and Terror of being reputed Madmen or Informers, and whereas ſome have broke this Bar, and have diſcharg'd their Conſciences, yet the little good they thereby did, or therefore receiv'd, hath been a great Diſcouragement; Yet notwithſtanding the Author of theſe following ſheets, knowing how much his King and Countrey have ſuffer'd, by ſuch Baſe and Treacherous Practices as are here Recited;

cited; Values not what ſome may cenſure, ſo that he may acquaint thoſe who have Power to inſpect and reward according to what hath been done.

To give your Honours no farther trouble, tho the wicked Practices of Men have furniſhed me with plenty of matter; I ſhall only add that Articles ſetting forth theſe matters, have been by me preferr'd againſt the Lords of the Admiralty, the Commiſſioners of the Navy, and the Commiſſioners for the ſick and wounded Seamen. Yet ſo great have been their intereſt, and ſo difficult to find a Zealous Patron of Truth, that all Labour and Travel in this matter hath been unſucceſsful.

It's probable the time of War was not ſo opportune, and ſeeing I was not permitted to prove thoſe Articles, it's now nevertheleſs hop'd by all Good Men, this Bleſſed Peace, as it affords Liberty, ſo it will give occaſion to this great and moſt Auguſt Aſſembly to look into theſe Affairs: In regard His Majeſty (of his innate Goodneſs) in His Late moſt Gracious Speech to both Houſes of *Parliament*, *Has been*

been pleas'd to expreſs his willingneſs, and deſire to rectify all ſuch Corruptions and Abuſes as may have crept into any part of the Adminiſtration during the War.

Which upon Examination will be found to be ſuch as are deſtructive to all *Human* Society, and tend to the Final over-throw of the Government. I am, my Lords and Gentlemen, with all profound Reſpect,

Your Honours,

Moſt Obedient Servant,

ROBERT CROSFIELD.

ALL Men of Senſe and Integrity muſt ſubſcribe that the Late Revolution wrought the great Deliverance of theſe Nations (a Mercy not to be forgotten by this nor ſucceeding Ages); and notwithſtanding after ſo proſperous a Settlement, we have been afflicted with ſo tedious a War, yet cannot our diſſatisfied Perſons juſtly charge this War (as ſome preſumptuouſly do) upon the ſcore of the Revolution; for it's manifeſt to all inquiſitive perſons, that *France* would never have attempted a War with us, had they not been encouraged by our Diviſions, ſo I doubt not but to make it Evident, that ſhe could never have protracted the War to this time, had not the Perfidiouſneſs, Cowardiſe, and moſt unworthy dealings among us encouraged and ſupported her.

He knows not the Conſtitution of *England*, who is ignorant that our Shipping are our Walls: therefore in order to what I promis'd, I ſhall firſt ſhow what Artifices were us'd to weaken them, by diſcouraging and beggaring ſome, by plain Murthering others, and forcing not a few of our Saylors to deſert their Native Countrey (though in the greateſt neceſſity) and ſerve under Foreign States for maintenance, which was not to be obtain'd at home. In the year 1695. a ſmall piece was preſented to the World, under the Title of *Juſtice*

perverted, wherein it was manifeſted that by the methods of *Queries* and *Runs* (a thing practicable in the Navy) ſome ſubtle Sophiſters did much abuſe the Nation by wronging the Saylors; for whereas it fortun'd that divers Seamen being taken with ſickneſs, ſome were ſet on ſhore at the Neighbouring Ports: others were ſent up to *London*-Hoſpitals for cure; it could not be thought but ſome among ſuch a multitude were paſt recovery and died: However, theſe poor wretches, though they had ſerv'd a conſiderable time, yet upon their dying were for the moſt part prickt *Run*; and ſuch as Death did pity and ſpare, the Officers, more crnel, would not; for if they were not recover'd, and on board within 30 days, they were generally prickt *Run*; and which is more monſtrous, it's well known, tho ſeveral as ſoon as Recover'd (the Ship to which they belong'd being ſayl'd) yet were they prickt *Run* from the firſt Ship where they were enter'd; and whereas it hath been cuſtomary in many Caſes to remove Seamen from ſhip to ſhip; as when a ſhip is commanded to Cruiſe, and is not ſufficiently mann'd for that purpoſe, ſome men are ſent into her out of other ſhips; by which means it may come to paſs that ſome particular perſons for the Opinion of their Valour, Skill and Integrity, may at times have been remov'd to ſerve on board four or five ſeveral ſhips, yet if they happen to be prickt *Run* in the laſt ſhip they ſerved in, both they and their Families generally utterly loſe all the benefit and Wages accruing by their former Services; and to compleat all this barbarity upon the poor Seamen, all things have been acted with that ſecrecy and myſtery, that though they found themſelves and Families ruin'd, yet could never

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learn the Cauſe, or find the Villain that did it. Theſe and ſuch like unworthy doings were repreſented to the Publick in the foreſaid Paper, and alſo confirm'd by the additional Teſtimony of Mr. *Hodges*, and I may freely ſay it did appear by the fatal conſequence, *viz.* the Paucity of Seamen to be found upon occaſion, and the backwardneſs of ſuch as were found to enter the ſervice; a thing ſo ſtrange as was never heard of in *England* before theſe Tricks; and one would think all Honour and Honeſty had deſerted our Coaſts, when theſe things could be ſo openly acted, yet ſo little regarded by the Navy-Board, whoſe place it was, and care it ſhould heve been, to have protected and encouraged our Seamen. But it's no wonder the Commiſſioners ſhould be ſo averſe to protect and do juſtice to the Seamen, when they ſuffer'd ſo great injuſtice to the King in falſe Contracts, and in embezling his Naval Stores, as was fully prov'd (by many Depoſitions) they did at *Portſmouth*; which Notorious Crimes being brought by Mr. *Trevor*, Mr. *Graham* and others before the Lords of the Admiralty, the Commiſſioners became Advocates of the Villains, and not Proſecutors, and did ſo far manifeſt their Reſentment againſt the Diſcoverers, that they immediately ſuſpended Mr. *Graham*, Clerk of the Checqne of *Portſmouth Yard*, and Mr. *Trevor*, Clerk of the Rope-Yard and others, and not ſatisfied therewith, endeavoured their utter rnin. Notwithſtanding ſo great diſcouragement, yet theſe Gentlemen, Mr. *Trevor*, Mr. *Graham*, and the reſt, proceeded in their diſcovery, and made the Crimes ſo fully appear, that Three of the Coumiſſioners of the *Navy* being preſent, did in the name of the whole Board, acknowledge to their Lordſhips that there were baſe and abominable

Practices in *Portſmouth-Yard*, and ſo put as good a Face as poſſible they could upon ſo bad a Matter. They recommended Mr. *Trevor* to their Lordſhips, as a perſon deſerving Encouragement for this honeſt diſcovery. Their Lordſhips embraced the motion, and order'd Mr. *Trevor* to manage the Proſecution againſt the Offenders, who accordingly brought the buſineſs to *Wincheſter-Sizes* following, where it was expected that the Mayor of *Portſmouth*, who had bound over the accuſed perſons, ſhould have return'd the Recognizance, but to the wonder of the Court had not; whereupon the Judge thought fit to fine him 200*l.* However, the Commiſſioner of *Portſmouth-Yard* procur'd an Attorney to poſt after the Judge to *Salisbury*, who by ſubtle, but falſe pretenſions, did ſo work upon the Goodneſs of the Judge, that the Fine was taken off. And that the ſaid Commiſſioner of *Portſmouth* was thus engaged in ſaving thoſe Rogues that had wrong'd the King, from Juſtice, is eaſily to be collected from the Note of Charges, in relation to that Journey, being drawn upon him from the aforeſaid Attorney; which Note is now to be ſeen in the Admiralty Office. Information of the ſame Matter was afterwards brought to the *King's-Bench-Bar*; ſome time before which, by cunning Intrigues, it was brought about that Mr. *Trevor* ſhould be no farther concern'd in the Proſecution; but another perſon was found out fit for that place, who was both wholly ignorant of the Facts, and eaſie to be wrought upon; and then when the Tryal came on, the Commiſſioners of the *Navy* appear'd in a Body on behalf of the Criminals; where it was moſt impudently aſſerted, that the Goods that had been embezled, were but Loans out of His Majeſties Stores; whenas

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the perſons in whoſe hands thoſe Goods were found, were private Traders, and no ways concern'd in ſhipping. At this time it fortun'd, but how is not yet known, that divers Gentlemen, who were ſubpena'd, in order to prove the Facts, were forgot, and never called; and having this advantage the Commiſſioners made their moſt on't, and prevail'd with the Jury to acquit the Actors, though themſelves had formerly own'd the Crimes before the Lords of the Admiralty. There being ſuch apparent Jugling in matters ſo foul, what wonder was it that perſons of untainted Honour and Loyalty, withdrew themſelves from ſerving longer at the Admiralty-Board, where they were in danger of ſeeing their own Reputation ſhipwreckt by the Injuſtice of ſome in the ſame Commiſſion! Or what wonder was it that ſubordinate Officers grew fearful of complaining and informing, when their Superiors did ſo openly Encourage, Uphold and Protect Villains, and with ſuch earneſtneſs and violence Perſecute the Diſcoverers; nor was it any wonder that Rogues and Villains took heart, believing this their proper time to proſper and be ſecure in.

A farther Inſtance how well his Majeſty has been ſerved, and the Intereſt of the *Nation* promoted, during theſe Wars, we may find in the Caſe of *Everett* the Shipwright: This man having detected many Frauds and Embezzlements iu the *King's Yards*, Voluntarily made a Propoſal to the *Lords of the Admiralty*, whereby to ſave His Majeſty 100000 *l. per annum*, in mattters relating to Building and Repairing the *Royal Navy*. The *Propoſal* was afterwards publiſh'd, and Dedicated to His Majeſty and both Houſes of Parliament; and

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was highly approved by many *Noble Perſons*, particularly his Grace the Duke of *Leeds*, as alſo by the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, by *Sir Ralph Delaval*, the Lord *Barkley*, and the then Lord *Danby*, &c. Likewiſe the Maſter and Aſſiſtance of the Company of Free *Shipwrights* did approve the ſame Propoſal. *Nay*, the Lords of the Admiralty, though not at firſt diſcerning the advantage of the ſaid Propoſal, did ſtrenuouſly oppoſe it; yet in concluſion ſignified their approbation thereof; but before they complied they did occaſion *Everett* to wait near Three Years. For albeit *Everet* gave in his Propoſal to their Honours *March* 169$\frac{2}{3}$. yet he was not permitted an Hearing till the 8*th* of *Februa*, *ry* following; at which time the *Commiſſioners of the Navy* being preſent, did ſo ſtiffly oppoſe the ſaid Propoſal, that *the Lords of the Admiralty* thought fit to throw it out. Being thus diſappointed, *Everett* knowing his Intentions to be Honeſt, and being unwilling to be hinder'd from ſerving his King and Countrey, humbly preſented his ſaid *Propoſal* to His Majeſty in Council; and His Majeſty was pleas'd, by Order of Council, bearing date the 22*d* of *March* 169$\frac{3}{4}$. to refer the ſame *Propoſal* to the *Lords of the Admiralty*; and that ſaid Order of Council, with the *Propoſal* of *Everett*, was laid before the Lords of the *Admiralty*, the 26*th ditto*. After that Mr. *Everett* paid his attendance on, and made ſeveral Motions to their Honours to be heard upon his *Propoſal*, he was, *April* 24. 1694. referr'd to the *Commiſſionors of the Navy*; upon whom waiting, was told *his Propoſal was Nonſenſe*; and was likewiſe threaten'd with an *Action of Defamation*, if he did not ſpeedily depart from it. Moreover, attend-

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ing the *Navy-Board* the 27*th* of *April* 1694. upon the Reference from the Lords of the *Admiralty*, they began, as he thought, to banter and baffle him; and order'd him to give them in writing a Demonſtration of ſeveral Heads laid before them: with which Order *Everett* complied, and the 30*th ditto* did Preſent them with ſuch a Demonſtration. Then they order'd him to attend them again *May* 2*d.* at which time he attending, was told, *the Surveyor was out of Town, and therefore they muſt reſpite his buſineſs till his return*; which hapning to be on the 8*th* of the ſame Month, and the ſaid *Everett* having no Summons to pay his attendance, waited till the 14*th*, and then Preſented rhe Navy-Board with a Scrowle of near Fifty Names, by which Perſons he could prove the ſeveral Crimes by him mentioned to be committed in his Majeſties Yards; at which time the anſwer given him was, *The Controuler was gone down to the Fleet, and that a matter of that conſequence as Mr.* Everett's *was, could not be diſpatch'd as it ought without a full Board; and that he need not be ſo preciſe in his attendance; for they could and would conſider of his matter without his appearing.*

June 11*th* 1694. Mr. *Everett* having as yet heard nothing of his matter, went to the *Navy-Office*, where obſerving no great buſineſs ſtirring, he took the opportunity to move the Board twice or thrice, but was unſucceſsful in all; and after many Hours waiting, went home unſatisfied. The following day he indeed received a Letter from the Board, intimating that *they now had his Propoſal under conſideration, and would proceed to make a Report thereof: and that he need not give himſelf any further trouble about it.* He therefore waited

waited till the 19*th*, but finding then all was no more than Words, he applied himself to the Lords of the *Admiralty*, and Presented their Lordships with a Narrative of his Proceedings with the *Commissioners of the Navy*: whereupon the day following *Everett* did receive a fresh Letter from the *Navy-Board*, dated *June* the 20*th*, whereby he was order'd to attend their Board the 23d of the same month, with Evidence to prove the Abuses complain'd of by him. Accordingly in time, and at the place appointed he did attend, and Twelve Master *Shipwrights* with him, Two of which Masters were called in, and before the Board did assert and prove several of the *Abuses* and *Base Practices* committed in *the King's Yards*. However, while these *Masters* were giving in their Evidence on behalf of their Sovereign Lord the King, the Commissioners were so impudent and insolent as both to Discourage and Terrifie them in a scoffing manner, saying, *How could it be possible to save His Majesty* 100000 *l.* per annum, *in Building and Repairing the Royal Navy, when the whole Charge did not amount to so much*; and that Worthy Captain *Wilshaw* did aver, *That the Charge of the whole did not amount to* 25000 *l.* and so they brake up abruptly, leaving *Mr. Everett* and his Evidence in the Board-Room, without the least Order for withdrawing or further attending.

June 27*th*. the Commissioners of the Navy did make their Report to the Lords of the Admiralty concerning *Everett*'s Proposal; in which Report they inserted divers false Reflections upon *Mr. Everett* and his Proceedings; of which whole matter the Reader may

may be fully satisfied if he have recourse to the Book before mention'd, *Viz. Justice Perverted*, p. 12. 13.

July the 6th, Mr. *Everett* again attended the Lords of the Admiralty, having before given a Narrative of his proceedings at the *Navy Board* and pray'd to be heard thereupon, as also that he might be favoured with a Copy of the *Navy Boards* Report, but could not prevail. The 7th and 9th of the same Month he attended again, and was inform'd by Mr. *Southern*, then Secretary to the Admiralty, that their Lordships Report was drawn up and would be delivered the next Council Day, *Viz.* The 12th following, but was not, wherefore *Everett* attended their Lordships the Day following, *Viz.* The 13th and laid Eight Heads before them relating to his Proposal, and humbly craved their Honours would take it into consideration and expedite their Report, bnt all to no purpose; So likewise *August* the 14th Day, but had no Answer. So the 17th he gave in a fresh Memorial, but without effect, the 21st he again Petitioned their Lordships, humbly reminding them of the great charge and dammage he had sustain'd. And was then ordered to attend *Fryday* the 24th, when they would consider his case, so as to make a full Report thereof. At which time he gladly and in great hopes attended the *Admiralty Board*, but was inform'd by the Secretary, that Sir *Robert Rich* was out of Town, and that therefore their Lordships had referred his matter till his Honours Return.

September the 5th *Everett* again attended their Lordships, when the Secretary inform'd him that Sir *John Lowther* was out of Town, but when he return'd, the

Admiralty would proceed to a final determination of his matter.

September the 18th, he again attended and was then told Admiral *Rook* was out of Town, but that the next Board of ſix, would without farther delay determine his matter: He was then directed to attend at Four in the Afternoon, the 20th following, which he did; and then part of his Propoſal being Read, the Commiſſioners of the *Navy's* Report was read alſo, in order to confute *Everett*; but he ſtill inſiſting, that he was able to make good every particular whereof he had given information, with much ado their Lordſhips were pleas'd to give him leave that he might produce his Witneſſes. The 30th of *October* following *Everett* father moved their Lordſhips for a Copy of the *Report* from the *Navy-Board*, as alſo for Summons for his Witneſſes; The latter, with ſome Reluctance, they granted; but by no means would condeſcend to the former.

Nov. 2d. Mr. *Everett* according to order, attended the *Admiralty-Board* at Ten in the Morning with Eleaven Witneſſes, and about Eleven was called in, where he found only Mr. *Prieſtman*, who told *Everett* that he believed the reſt of the Members had forgotten his buſineſs, and therefore he muſt have patience to another day: *Everett* thereupon intreated his Lordſhip, to conſider the great charge and trouble he had been at in getting his Witneſſes together, and to order that they might now being together be examin'd upon Oath, he having breviates of their Depoſitions ready drawn. Sir *George Rook* then coming in, Mr. *Everett* was ordered to attend with his Witneſſes at Four in the Afternoon,

ternoon, which he did; they were called in about Six, and being ſeverally and ſtrictly examined, did plainly prove the matters alledg'd by *Everett*——About Ten at Night their Lordſhips order one of their Clarks to examine them over again; and to take their Subſcriptions to the aforeſaid breviates, but the ſaid Clark, whether ſo directed or no is not known, did Browbeat and Banter the ſaid evidence, and would not ſuffer them to Subſcribe their Breviates. The 27th of the ſame month, Mr. *Everett* delivered to their Lordſhips the Depoſitions of Seventeen Witneſſes who were Sworn before a Juſtice of Peace. Whereby the Frauds and Embezzlements alledged to be Committed in His Majeſties Yards were ſufficiently prov'd, he then Sollicited for a Report from their Lordſhips, but could obtain none till the 29th of *January*, 169⅞. In all which time, he could no ways obtain a Copy of the *Navy-Boards* Report.

In the Lords of the Admiralties Report, they were pleas'd to allow of that part of *Everetts* Propoſal, relating to the ſaving of ſo great expences. And expreſs themſelves as very deſirous, that the preſent Circumſtance of the State could Comport therewith, but there's not the leaſt Notice taken of the many Crimes prov'd before them, to have been Committed in His Majeſties Yards. However this Report being given in at the *Council-Board*; the matter was referred to ſuch of the Lords of His Majeſties moſt Honourable Privy Council, as belong'd to the Committee of Trade and Plantations, who forthwith granted Mr. *Everett* a Copy of the *Navy-Boards* Report.

February following, *Viz.* 25th 1695 Mr. *Everett* preſented their Lordſhips with a Memorial, in Anſwer to the Report of the *Navy-Board.*

March 27th 1695. Mr. *Everett* prov'd before their Lordſhips, by the Oaths of Divers Credible Witneſſes, many great Crimes to be committed by ſeveral Officers and others in His Majeſties Yards, at which time the Commiſſioners of the Navy did, notwithſtanding ſo great and plain evidence, inſinuate to their Lordſhips that their Officers were Juſt and Innocent, hoping, as was thought, that *Everett* had nothing but Generals, and was not ſufficient to prove any Crime upon any particular Perſon, *April*, 1695. Mr. *Everett* upon a full hearing (before the Lords aforeſaid) face to face with the Commiſſioners of the Navy, did prove the Report of the *Navy-Board* to be falſe and ſcandalous, which was alſo by their Lordſhips acknowledged to be ſo; again, *April* the 6th, Mr. *Everett* did preſent to their Lordſhips two Papers, recounting the Various Frauds and Abuſes committed in His Majeſties Yards of *Portſmouth*, *Chattam*, and *Deptford*, which their Lordſhips inſpecting, told Mr. *Everett*, that they were too well ſatisfied of ſuch practices to doubt them; However, *Everett* perſiſted for Freedom, to prove his Allegations; upon which he was told by their Lordſhips, they would refer the matter to the Lords of the Admiralty; ſubmitting, to this reference, Mr. *Everett* did on the 13th, 16th, 19th, 27th, 29th of *April*, and on the 6th and 7th of *May* enſuing, by near Forty Witneſſes prove before their Lordſhips the matters of Fact, charged upon the Officers and others belonging to His Majeſties Yards aforeſaid, and their Lordſhips were ſatisfied in the Proof, at which time Mr. *Everett* concluded his

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Teſtimony in this Caſe; Yet could by no entreaties procure a Report to be made till *September* following, by which Report His Majeſty being made acquainted with the Faithful Services of Mr. *Everett*, was graciouſly pleas'd to order the Lords of the Admiralty to put him into ſome employ in the Navy, or other ways to beſtow upon him a Reward ſuitable to his Merits. Hereupon their Lordſhips directed the Commiſſioners of the Navy to pay unto the ſaid *Everett* 100 *l.* and they accordingly iſſued out their Order *March 7th*, 165⅔. In which Order they were pleaſed to take notice, *This Benevolence of His Majeſty's was for the Faithful Services of Mr.* Everett. But yet there was no news of Puniſhing the Offenders. Mr. *Everett*, willing to ſatisfie the World, he ſerv'd his Majeſty purely out of a Principle of Loyalty, after this 100 *l.* received, which not to mention his Deſerts, did nothing nigh countervail the Charge he had been at, did ſollicite the Earl of *Rumny* for a Commiſſion enabling him to ſeize *Embezled Stores;* his Honour being very zealous and forward to encourage ſo good a Work, the Commiſſioners of the Navy could not well oppoſe, but complied, and granted Mr. *Everett* a Commiſſion, in purſuance of which Commiſſion Mr. *Everett* in a little time made One Hundred and Thirty Seizures, as of *Anchors, Cables, Cordage, Timber and Amwunition*; and of *Ordinance* Four, each containing Nine Hundred Weight, which he delivered into the King's Stores; but inſtead of being encouraged in ſuch his Faithful Service, he hath been ſlander'd, abuſed and ill treated both by Navy-Board, and the Commiſſioners of the Victualling-Office while, in the mean time, ſuch as he detected in their Baſe Actions, were cheriſhed

and

and reſcued from Juſtice; an Inſtance whereof follows: Mr. *Everett* having ſeized on Board Ship Three Puncheons of Salt, value 6 *l.* the Commiſſioners of the Victualling Office refus'd to pay him his Proportion, which, according to the King's allowance, ought to be the Third Part; but inſtead thereof would have fobb'd him off with Ten ſhillings. It is true they promiſed him an Hearing at their Board, concerning the ſeizure; where they engaged the Commander of the Ship ſhould be preſent; but he neither heard a word more of them, nor received any Reward for this Service. Again, near an Hundred Empty Casks being Embezled, were carried by Mr. *Everett* and return'd into the Stores; but the foreſaid Commiſſioners refus'd to take any Cognizance of this Matter; alſo alledging, that *Purſers, and others, entruſted therewith, are obliged to diſcount for what they do not return, after the rate of* 12 *s. per Tunn.* And well they may, when they themſelves own they ſtand the King in 34 s. *per* Tunn. When Mr. *Everett* entered upon this laſt Deſign of ſeizing all the Embezled Stores he could meet with, the Commiſſioners of the Navy appear'd ſo forward in his Encouragement, that they order'd him the Third of all ſuch Purchaſe: but after a while, hearing the Diſcoveries he daily made, they themſelves did declare at the Board, *That they believed all the Merchants Ships were furniſhed out of the King's Stores.* And at this rate they made but a Jeſt of the King's Expence, and the Nation's Loſs. Soon after, minded to pick a Quarrel with Mr. *Everett*, they refuſed to pay the Third Part till ſuch time as the Offenders were convicted.

In

In the beginning of *Auguſt* 1695. the Commiſſioners of the Navy hired a Veſſel for the ſaid *Everett* to proceed in his Deſign of ſeizing Embezled Stores; and he having ſeized ſeveral Parcels of *Naval Stores* at *Harwich*, particularly a Parcel of Cordage, value 60 *l.* the Mayor of the Town oppos'd him with great Violence; ſo alſo did Juſtice *Smith*, Mr. *Wyldbore*, Collector of His Majeſties Cuſtoms, and other Officers. And notwithſtanding *Everet* produced, and read before them the Kings Proclamation, the Earl of *Rumnys* and *Navy-Boards* warrant for his Authority. Yet all was ſlighted by theſe Perſons, and conſequently the Cordage taken was reſcued by open force; Nay, the Veſſel of Mr. *Everett* was ſeized by Mr. *Wyldbores* order.

A complaint of theſe *evil doings* being laid before the *Commiſſioners of the* Navy, the 12*th* of *Auguſt* 1695. they refuſed to take Cognizance thereof, pretending the *Perſons herein accus'd, were not under their Juriſdiction.* Nay, they refus'd their Warrant, tho often deſired, for the Releaſe of the Veſſel; nor would they take any Courſe that the Cordage before ſpoken of ſhould be receized, though it was ſeveral times defired. Nay, in *September* following, viz. the 30th, though *Everett* laid before the *Lords of the Admiralty* Nine *Depoſitions* relating to *this Matter*, and fully prov'd the Cordage before ſpoken of to be *His Majeſties Stores.* Nay, ſo prov'd it, that the Solliçitor of the Navy did acknowledge it ſo to be. Yet, though *many Petitions* have been preferr'd, no inſpection can as yet be obtained into this Matter.

The

The *Commiſſioners* of the Navy deſigning to defraud the King, did order about Two Hundred and Forty Tunn of Good Hemp; that is, *Bands and Ribbs*, to be brought from *Chattam*, Sixteen Tun, and Twelve Hundred Weight whereof they ſold at Thirty Shillings *per* Tunn, under the Name of *Rakings and Flyings*: But they were ſo kind, as fearing their Chapman had had a bad Bargain, to deliver him for that ſixteen Tunn and Twelve Hundred Weight, between Seventy and Eighty Tunn. A certain Gentleman hapning to ſee the Hemp, *did bid the Commiſſioners Fifteen Pound a Tunn for it.* But they fearing the Matter might come to light, refus'd his Offer, and with all Secreſie and Diſpatch imaginable, huſh'd up the Matter; by which means the King was cheated about Three Thouſand Pound. The Publick had ſome account of this Tranſaction, *March* the 17th, 169$\frac{1}{2}$. by which means one Mr. *Culliford* making his Obſervation thereon, ſent to me to inquire by what means I could make Proof hereof. I then nominated to him a certain Eminent Citizen that could prove it. He deſired me to introduce him into the acquaintance of that Perſon: which not long after I did, at which our Meeting Mr. *Culliford* took down in writing from the Gentleman's own mouth, the full Narration *; promiſing to lay it before the *Houſe of Commons*; but as

* This worthy Perſon, out of a Generous Principle, and Love to Juſtice, expended above 50 *l.* in detecting this Villany; there was Seven perſons made Oath of it; upon which the Commiſſioners of the Navy immediately took every one of them into the Kings Service.

far

far as I could yet Learn, he knew how to ſerve himſelf better then ſo. For he ſoon gave the Commiſſioners of the Navy ſuch intimation of what he knew in this matter, they to ſtop his mouth agreed to buy the Sail-Cloath of him for the Navy, which before they had refus'd to do; and ſo Induſtrious were they to make him whom they knew to be Privy, to their Fraud, their Friend. That in a little time after, he was Complemented by the Lords of the Treaſury, with a very conſiderable place being made Surveyor General of His Maieſties Cuſtoms; and to make all ſure, the Lords of the Admiralty with the Commiſſioners of the Navy, condeſcended to make this Gentleman a viſit, upon pretence to ſee his Ingenuity in the Sayl Cloath Trade, which they did, and upon their return gave large Encomiums, what a profitable deſign this was like to prove to the Publick, and ſo there was an end of the Hemp. Not long after the Lords of the Admiralty and the Commiſſioners of the Navy, to expreſs their fidelity to the Nation, did Publiſh in the *Gazzet* (as they have often done before and ſince) their Readineſs to receive any Informations of any Frauds or Deceits us'd in the Navy, and their Reſolution to encourage the Informers. But for ought that can be underſtood, they muſt mean ſuch Informers as Mr. *Culliford.*

Nor are we beholding to the Commiſſioners of the Navy, only for diſcouraging the Publick cauſe, and weakning its intereſt, but the Lords of the Admiralty have been fully out as kind, for it has been a uſual practice of them (for the firſt five Years) during this unhappy Wars (which I may well ſo call ſince they have

ſo much help to make them ſo) to delay and detain Ships by Embargo (as is preſum'd partly upon the Account of the profit, accruing by Protections and Permits) till many of them have been damaged in their Ladings, and conſequently ruin'd in their Voyage to the unſpeakable injury of the whole Nation. And moreover, the many Ships reputed by them to be ſent out a Cruzing to Guard the *Seas*: Yet loſt we above One Hundred Ships of War, and ſome Thouſands of Merchants Ships, it was well lookt after the mean while: But in Truth it could not well be expected to be other ways, for not a Journal of theſe pretended Guard-ſhips (or any that went as Convoy) were ever examined when it was the only means whereby to know, whether they performed their Duty or no, ſo that if their Lordſhips did not know they were otherways employ'd, than was pretended. Yet hereby they gave them as ſecure an opportunity as they could deſire, of lying in Port, Trading, or Roving up and down at Pleaſure: All which can hardly admit of any other Conſtruction, then that they extended thereby to beg- 72
ger the People and Ruin the Trade of the Nation.

As for the Barbarous uſage of our *Seamen* when ſick in Hoſpitals, or the Enemies when taken in War, that I ſpeak nothing to a point that would afford ſo.

Copious matter is, becauſe the Reader may find it very fully ſet out in a Book Entitul'd, *Baſtons Caſe*; however I cannot paſs over this Tragical Hiſtory without this Remark. Tho it was made appear before the Commiſſioners of Accounts, that one *Leigh* an Apothecary then living in *Watling-ſtreet*, had delivered into the Elabaratory in the *Savoy*, for the uſe of the ſick

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and wounded, a great quantity of dammaged Rubarb which he had bought at between Nine and Ten Pence a Pound: Yet was he not call'd in Queſtion there for*.

But Mr. *Baſton* who diſcover'd this and other baſe Practices (as cheating the King, *&c*) Notwithſtanding, he was by His Majeſty Recommended to the Care of the Lords of the Admiralty, who had themſelves not long before promiſed to do him all poſſible Service. Yet when His Majeſty was gone for *Flanders*, was ſhamefully ſlited by them and left to the mercy of his Enemies, † tho he had twice before prov'd their Crimes by the Kings own immediate order.

And that our Ruin might be compleated, the Commiſſioners of the Poſt-Office became as expeditious as any of the other in Acting their Part: For it has been made appear to the Lord Juſtices by Mr. *Blackhall*, in 1696. Tho not any of the particulars thereof were ever till now offer'd to the Publick, that the Officers of the Poſt-Houſe did every Poſt in and out, uſually break open the Letters of Honourable Perſons, which as it was againſt Law and Good manners, ſo certainly can

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Before I brought my Articles againſt the Lords of the Admiralty, *&c*. *Mr. Blackhall* ſent me an Account of all this Affair, with the Names of the Witneſſes that could prove the Facts, and very much preſt me to bring the matter into my Articles, but for ſeveral Good Reaſons I refus'd ſo to do.

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never be ſuppos'd to have been done to any good intent; moreover it was prov'd, that they were converſant even to a ſcandal, with profeſſed Papiſt. And others too much averſe to the preſent Government, nor can they ever perſwade the World that the ground of their great Familiarity with theſe Perſons was the Wit, or the Liberality, or good humour they found in them and their Company when it does appear, it was to ſerve ſome great, tho ſecret end as witneſſeth, theſe Perſons having their Letters every Poſt deliver'd to them two hours before the King had his: Which was of dangerous conſequence in thoſe times. For if they receiv'd intelligence, their deſign was under any Likelyhood of diſcovery, they had time to eſcape the hands of Juſtice, or if any thing was to be attempted againſt the Kings Life or Government, they had the opportunity to ſurprize him before his intelligence could prevent. Moreover it was fully prov'd, that after His Majeſties Letters came into the Poſt-Office in order to be carried out. It was Cuſtomary to ſtop the Mails for an hour or more, of which no tollerable Account can be given. But it gives occaſion to ſome to think, they took that opportunity to inſpect the Kings ſecrets. And the Reaſon for this ſuſpicion is, they ever wrote their Letters to their Correſpondents beyond *Sea*, after they had received His Majeſties into their Office, as if they wanted what to write before, farther it was prov'd, that the ſaid Officers did ſend every Poſt great quantities of *Gazzets*, &c. As alſo great Numbers of Letters *Frank*, and at the cloſe of the hearing, Mr. *Blackhall* gave in to the Lord Juſtices an Account how the Kings Revenue

nue in that Office has been ſunk, or impar'd 30000 *per Annum*, and ſo far were men of this temper from being ſatisfied herewith, that according to Mr. *Samſons* Proof, they purloyn'd near one half of the Peny Poſt-Office income : And that none may queſtion this, the turning out the Controuler and Receiver of that Office, upon that Proof is a ſufficient Teſtimony, and that which muſt certainly make theſe Crimes the more Notorious, is, that for Divers years ſucceſſively, complaint had been made from time to time to the Commiſſioners of the Poſt-Office of theſe matters, and by whom they were done (as when enquir'd into themſelves could not deny before the Lords Juſtices.) Yet they made no Reformation, but were ſo reſolute, that when the fouleſt matters of this Nature were prov'd upon Mr. *Leaſon*, the Controuler of the Forreign Poſt-Office. Yet he was continued till the Third Letter from His Majeſty, with much a due got him remov'd. But on the other hand, they let ſlip no opportunity to turn out ſuch of their Members as they found had been Inſtrumental in making this neceſſary diſcovery, as they did one of good Parts, and good Principles; and almoſt begger'd another (by evil and indirect means) that diſcover'd the wicked Practices of *Leaſon* and the Peny Poſt-Office.

I had thought of ſtopping my Pen here, but a Tranſaction ſo deſperately miſchievous to the King and Nations intereſt occuring to any mind, I can in no wiſe excuſe my ſelf from the Relation, which is as follows, Mr. *Woodgate* Late Poſt Maſter of *Canterbury*, did by Eighteen

teen or Nineteen Depositions given in upon Oath, make it appear unto the Mayor and other Magistrates of the City of *Canterbury*, that for Divers years together during the Late War with *France*. Some Hundreds of Horse were privately placed upon the Road, between *London*, *Canterbury*, *Dover*, &c. For carrying on an under-hand Correspondence with *France*, and by which means not only Papers, but Persons were convey'd to and from *France*. Of this matter the Commissioners of the Post-Office were Divers times inform'd by the said *Woodgate*. Yet were they so far from putting a stop to such a dangerous design, that it appears by a Letter under one of the Commissioners hand, it was abetted and encouraged by them; the Depositions before mention'd (as likewise the said Original Letter) relating to this affair, did for some considerable time lye in the hands of Mr. *Blackhall* in order to a Prosecution. But his Zeal was soon cool'd by being made Receiver of the Penny Post Office, he had then no heart farther to Prosecute the Evil Actions of the Post-Office.

Now, whoever impartially weighs the preceeding matter, and duly considers what foul Crimes have been prov'd against the Officers of the *Mint*, &c. Can do no other ways then conclude all other Offices, have taken the same measures (for by *Hercules*'s Foot we may know the Proposition of his Body) in regard it so plainly appears, all Men in Publick Employment have been let loose to their own Appetite, to Act and do as they please without having any regard to the Law: The Conse-

Conſequence of which has been not only the deſtruction of a Multitude of Saylors, and the Impoveriſhing and Ruining of many Thouſands Honeſt, Loyal, Induſtrious Families (who have not been ſo much as apprehenſive how all this ruin has been brought upon them) but the cauſe of all the Publick Debts and Diſtreſs that has fallen upon the Nation in General: And the Reaſon its Credit is ſo much Impared both at home and abroad; which can never be reſtored otherways then by a due Adminiſtration of Juſtice: So great a miſery it is, a Nation ſhould be ſo unhappy as not to be ſenſible of the benefit of order, till diſorder ſhow it.

In all difficult and unuſual Caſes it's Cuſtomary to have recourſe to records, to ſearch for Examples and Preſidents, which has ever been Judg'd to be of great Uſe, and of all our Kings ſince the *Norman* Conqueſt, I conceive the Reign of *Henry* the Third to be the moſt Remarkable; and ſeems to come neareſt to our preſent Caſe, who having been driven into great ſtraits and his People into great diſtreſs; even then he happily and unexpectedly reſtor'd the Nation again to Peace: Upon which he began to look back, and ſearch the Ground of his former miſery; And my truly worthy Author Sir. *Robert Cotton*, who writ the Life of that Prince (which he preſented to King *James* the Firſt) ſays in *p.* 24. *Here he finds his waſteful hand had been to quick, both over the Fortunes and Bleſſings of his People*;

The Griping avarice of his Civil Miniſters, * &c. *And referring all to baſe greedy and unworthy* † *Miniſters (whoſe Councels were ever more ſubtle than ſubſtantial) he had thrown down thoſe Pillars of Soveraignty and Safety, Reputation abroad and reverence at home. Thus at laſt he Learn'd, that reward and reprehenſion juſtly laid do Ballance Government; and that it much Importeth a Prince, the Hand to be equal that holdeth the Scale.*

Pag. 26. *His Court, wherein at this time the Faults of great Men, did not only by Approbation, but Imitation receive true Comfort and Authority, for their Crimes now became Examples and Cuſtoms; he Purged very Judiciouſly and Severely; ſince from thence proceeds either the Regular, or the Irregular condition of the Common State.*

Pag. 27. *And to diſcover now his own Capacity, and what part he meaneth to bear hereafter in all deliberate*

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* In our Age the wicked practice of buying and ſelling Employments, as it were by Inch of Candle who bids moſt, has been of fatal Conſequence to the whole body of the Nation, and the only Reaſon why publick Crimes have not been look't into: All generally ſpeaking pertaking of the ſpoil, for it's Notorious to the world, that as Employments have advanced in value the miſery of the People has encreaſed. But if my Lord Mayor, &c. Be oblidg'd to keep Port and Grandure, 'tis fit it ſhould be by ſome publick allowance, or on his own demaines; and not live upon the Blood and Tears of the People. *Vide, Englands* Calamities diſcover'd. Sold by *Joſeph Fox* in *Weſtminſter-Hall*, and *Robert Clavel* at the *Peacock* in *Fleet-ſtreet*.

† The Multitude of Petitions that now lye in the Council-Office (which are kept from His Majeſties Knowledge) and have not been Read, gives a ſufficient demonſtration of the Inhumanity, of ſome Perſons at this time in the Government.

Expe-

Expeditions, he ſiteth himſelf in Councel daily, and diſpoſeth affairs of moſt weight in his own Perſon; for Councellors be they never ſo wiſe or worthy, are but Acceſſaries, not Principals, in Suſtentation of the State.

This wonderful Change to the General State (ſo hopeleſs lately to recover her former Liberty, they ſought now for nothing but the mildeſt Servitude) brought them home again with admiration to his Devotion and their own Duty.

He that will lay (we ſee) the Foundation of Greatneſs upon Popular Love, muſt give them Eaſe and Juſtice; for they meaſure the Bond of their obedience, by the Good always that they receive.

This Peace attended ever after his Age and Hearſe, &c.

So that all the Actions of his future Reign, were exact Grounds of Diſcipline and Policy, for HIS BEST SUCCESSOR TO RULE BY AFTER.

To conclude, the Heathen *Romans* by their Virtue and Moral Juſtice, rais'd themſelves to a great pitch of Glory, yet afterwards by their Wickedneſs and Corruption were Ruined; and became a Prey to Divers Barbarous Nations; So unleſs this Nation hath Virtue enough within it ſelf to conquer

and overcome all these horrible Corruptions, we shall now at last unavoidably split (after all our great expence of Blood and Treasure) as it were upon a Rock, and fall unpitied into the Hands of our Enemies; out of which (like the Rich Man in the Gospel) we shall find no Redemption.

FINIS.